

Appl. No.: 10/030,933  
Group Art Unit: 1615  
Applicants' Amendment After Final submitted December 17, 2004

**In the Claims:**

Please amend claims 19 and 30, without prejudice, as shown below in the following complete listing of all claims ever presented. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the instant application:

Claims 1-18 (Canceled):

**Claim 19 (Currently Amended):** A process for preparing a crosslinker-free composition, said process comprising:

- (a) providing an aqueous mixture consisting essentially of a polysaccharide biopolymer, wherein the aqueous mixture has a viscosity of from 1,000 mPas to 100,000 mPas;
- (b) combining a precipitant with the aqueous mixture to form a crosslinker-free biopolymer composition; and
- (c) dewatering the crosslinker-free biopolymer composition to form a crosslinker-free three-dimensional structure.

**Claim 20 (Previously Presented):** The process according to claim 19, wherein the aqueous mixture is present in a state selected from the group consisting of solutions and homogenous suspensions.

**Claim 21 (Previously Presented):** The process according to claim 19, wherein the biopolymer is present in an amount of from 0.1 to 15% by weight, based on the aqueous mixture.

**Claim 22 (Previously Presented):** The process according to claim 19, wherein the aqueous mixture has a pH value of from 1 to 12.

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Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 19, wherein the aqueous mixture has a viscosity of from 10,000 mPas to 40,000 mPas.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 19, wherein the precipitant comprises an aqueous solution selected from the group consisting of aqueous solutions of hydrogen carbonates, carbonates, hydrogen phosphates, hydroxides of alkali metals, alkaline earth metals, ammonia and organic nitrogen bases, and combinations thereof.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 19, wherein the precipitant comprises an aqueous solution of sodium hydrogen carbonate.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 19, wherein the precipitant comprises an aqueous solution selected from the group consisting of aqueous solutions of mineral acids, organic carboxylic acids, and combinations thereof.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 19, wherein the dewatering of the crosslinker-free biopolymer composition comprises freeze-drying.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 19, further comprising combining one or more auxiliaries or additives with the aqueous mixture prior to dewatering.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 19, further comprising combining one or more auxiliaries or additives with the crosslinker-free composition subsequent to dewatering.

Claim 30 (Currently Amended): A process for preparing a crosslinker-free composition, said process comprising:

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(a) providing an aqueous mixture consisting essentially of a polysaccharide biopolymer, wherein the aqueous mixture has a viscosity of from 10,000 mPas to 40,000 mPas and a pH value of from 1 to 12;

(b) combining a precipitant selected from the group consisting of aqueous solutions of hydrogen carbonates, carbonates, hydrogen phosphates, hydroxides of alkali metals, alkaline earth metals, ammonia and organic nitrogen bases, and combinations thereof, with the aqueous mixture to form a crosslinker-free biopolymer composition; and

(c) freeze-drying the crosslinker-free biopolymer composition to form a crosslinker-free three-dimensional structure.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented): A crosslinker-free, biopolymer composition prepared by the process according to claim 19.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented): A crosslinker-free, biopolymer composition prepared by the process according to claim 24.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented): A crosslinker-free, biopolymer composition prepared by the process according to claim 27.

Claim 34 (Previously Presented): A crosslinker-free, biopolymer composition prepared by the process according to claim 30.

Claim 35 (Previously Presented): A medicament or medical product comprising a crosslinker-free, biopolymer composition prepared by the process according to claim 19.

Claim 36 (Previously Presented): A cosmetic preparation comprising a crosslinker-free, biopolymer composition prepared by the process according to claim 19.

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**Claim 37 (Previously Presented):** A food additive comprising a crosslinker-free, biopolymer composition prepared by the process according to claim 19.